Faith and Inspiration

The Folly of Playing God



Photo by Jordan Wozniak on U

23:10-12, Proverbs 12:10,

Proverbs 27:23-27, etc.).

It seems to be a common,

even divinely endorsed

inclination to advocate

breeding of the highest

produce and livestock. In

practicing the cultivation

of "genetically modified

early eras of civilization.

there be — a limit to this

order? Certainly, we laud

manipulation of natural

the scientific

breakthroughs that

benefit or improve our

ability to live healthily

and work efficiently and

effectively. Regrettably,

we also do sometimes

exploit or redefine the

nature or operation of

world to suit our own

prejudiced purposes or

pretentious efforts claim

to favor some perceived

higher ideal of "human

advancement" or some

are usually merely

self-serving or

such grandiose design but

self-aggrandizing. Human

arrogance is often the

narcissistic whims.

Typically, such

various elements of our

observe attempts to

Is there — or should

organisms" since our

quality and yield of

some sense, human

beings have been

husbandry (Exodus

Faith and Inspiration with Vincent V. Marshburn -

Throughout its entire history, the human species has wrestled with the notion of authoring and guiding its own development and destiny. Back in the Garden of Eden, we rejected the opportunity to commit to fully relying on God for our source of wisdom and provision, and instead chose to "lean on our own understanding" (as advised against in Proverbs 3:5).

Despite our rebellious and seemingly contrary predisposition, God insists on coaxing us through his ages-long plan of redemption. Along the way, he urges us to apply our intelligence and creativity — qualities derived from our inception in the divine image — towards works that benefit our societies and ultimately glorify him.

glorify him.

One of our earliest commissions from the Creator was to sensibly steward his creation (Genesis 1:26-30, 2:15). In Scripture, God even provides counsel and guidance on matters such as agriculture and animal

defining characteristic of various endeavors to exert some control or constraint over otherwise ordinary processes and mechanisms, including reproduction. There is reasonable and ordained agency, discipline, and discretion, and then there is reckless exploitation and unbridled, indifferent negligence.

According to the

Encyclopedia Britannica, eugenics is "the selection of desired heritable characteristics in order to improve future generations, typically in reference to humans." While it may seem innocuously innocent or at least fair — to expect that we would all desire healthy and viable offspring, the philosophies behind eugenics movements tend to take it a bit further. Such worldviews allege and indeed assume that only certain groups or types of individuals who possess specific preferred physical or cognitive characteristics should be permitted to contribute to an overall gene pool. Essentially, eugenics posits that not all human beings equally possess

intrinsic value. British explorer and natural scientist Francis Galton coined the term "eugenics" in the late 1800s. Galton promoted a concept of "social Darwinism" whereby aspects of human societal development such as sociology, politics, and economics, are perceived as subject to forces of "natural selection" such as "survival of the fittest" — that would be similarly presumed for

biological processes.

The so-called science of eugenics has influenced various crusades and campaigns throughout history. The work of many Nazi scientists is notorious for taking the assertions of eugenics to a ghastly extreme in identifying certain ethnicities or populations as being inherently inferior. Margaret Sanger's motivation to launch the so-called "birth control movement" of the early 1900s was predicated upon questionable

eugenics theories. Many "Star Trek" fans are at least vaguely familiar with the notion of eugenics and its part in the fictionalized "future history" of the franchise storyline. The infamous Khan, one of Captain Kirk's most notorious nemeses, was a product of a eugenics war that occurred on Earth some time prior to the founding of the United Federation of Planets. The lore of Khan and his progenitors and contemporaries is further explored in the prequel television series "Star Trek: Enterprise."

In a sequence of episodes, the crew of the pre-Federation starship Enterprise NX-01 contends with a rogue band of biologically enhanced humans referred to as Augments, the results of the repudiated eugenics project that had produced the aforementioned Khan. Like Khan, these Augments had been genetically engineered with exceptional physical strength and intellect. As portrayed in much of

science fiction, this kind of augmentation tends to foster excessive ambition and contempt

and contempt. And so of course, the Augments believe that they deserve to dominate humanity by virtue of their presumed superior condition. During one scene, Phlox, the Denobulan chief medical officer aboard the Enterprise, discusses the ethics of eugenics with Doctor Arik Soong, a human scientist who is striving to assist and guide the Augments.

SOONG: But you don't approve of what I've done.
PHLOX: You tried to redesign your species.
The first time that was attempted on Earth, the

result was thirty million

deaths.
SOONG: We can't let past mistakes hold us back.

PHLOX: It's your responsibility as a scientist to learn from past mistakes. SOONG: Well, what makes you think I haven't?
PHLOX: I can read.

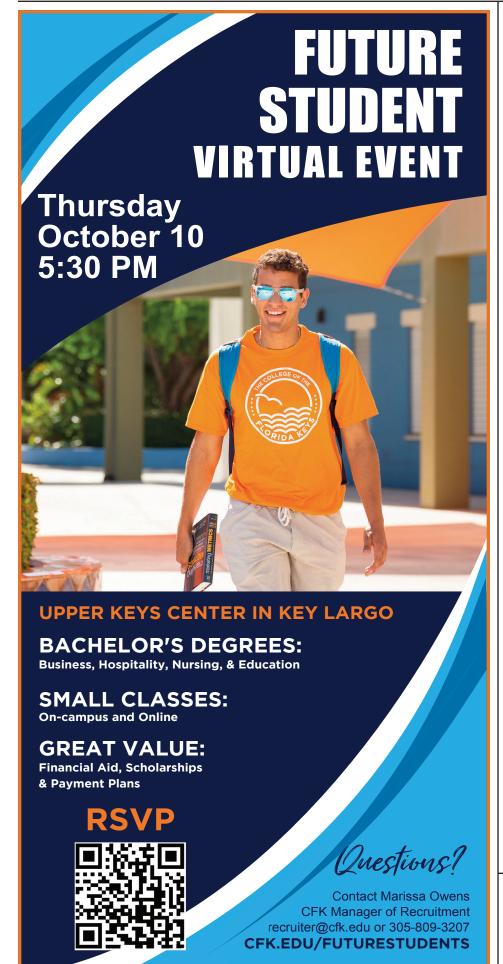
During another particular encounter, Captain Jonathan Archer confronts Soong and Malik, the current de facto leader of the group of Augments. It is revealed that Malik had recently killed their former leader, Raakin.

SOONG: Why? MALIK: He wasn't strong enough. SOONG: You all went along with this? ARCHER: Why are you so surprised? Whenever a group of people start believing they're better than everyone else the results are always the same.

SOONG: I don't need a history lesson from you. ARCHER: You need it from someone

Any effort to regard one set of individuals as more worthy of existence than any other runs counter to the Biblical belief that redemption is intended for all of humanity. God does not show partiality, and he seeks righteousness from every nation (Acts 10:34-35). Humanistic doctrines such as eugenics substitute cold human thought and reason for Godly principles of compassion and acceptance. By such ideologies, human beings "play God" by determining for themselves what and who is of value.

Our role as part of the Creation is to exercise God's great love and care for it. Indeed, when we recognize our position in proper relation to him, who formed and fashioned us, we gain a respectful and practical perspective. As Scripture describes, he is the potter, we are the clay; it is not our place to supersede his sovereignty in defining the essence of our being (Isaiah 29:16, Romans 9:20). Our submission to his will in our making and our living is paramount to our progress towards restoring the harmony and confidence we shared with him from the beginning.



Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?



By Yanira Lewis Hispanic Heritage
Month is here again,
running this year from
Sunday, September 15,
2024, to Tuesday,
October 15, 2024. This
month-long celebration
honors the contributions
and history of Hispanic
and Latino communities.
However, navigating the
terminology used to
describe these diverse
groups can be complex.

To clarify, here are the three main terms often used:

Hispanic - mainly refers to the language, also known as a Spanish-speaking person from a Spanish speaking country. This category includes many Spanish speaking countries, but excludes Brazil where Portuguese is the official language.

Latino - focuses more on the location or geography of the speaker's origin. This includes people from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. Some countries are included in this list because of their geographical location,

even though they don't speak Spanish. These include: Brazil, France, Guiana, and Haiti, just to name a few. This category does not include Spanish speakers from Spain.

Spanish - A name used for Spanish speakers from the country of Spain.

For many countries and territories the terms can be used interchangeably, such as Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

To further confuse things in recent years, the terms Latinx or Latine has been introduced to our vocabulary to promote inclusivity. This term is used to distinguish gender neutral Latin American individuals. Latine is now the more accepted term for this group of individuals.

If you don't remember anything else, know that regardless of the term used to describe the people we are celebrating this month, remember that...

1. Their history is long, longer than American history. For example, Mexican history can be traced back four centuries. As of 2024, the United States is 248 years old

2. Although they are under the same umbrella of "Spanish speaker," the language, cultures, and countries are unique and varied.

3. Their food is amazing!

3. Their food is amazing!
Again, traditional fare is as varied as the many cultures and countries—where many South Americans may focus on potatoes, Central Americans may focus on corn, and the Caribbean tends to focus on plantains.

plantains.
4. There are tons of ways to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month: taste the cuisine, talk to a Hispanic person, join a Hispanic Heritage Community event, learn about Hispanic celebrations and traditions, read books by Hispanic or Latino authors, or learn a Hispanic dance, such as salsa or cumbia.

To submit an obituary or death notice, email wording and jpg photo to Emily@NewsLeaderMail.com, or call 305-245-2311.

Print deadline is Wednesday at noon.